

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 9.30am
on 2 SEPTEMBER 2011**

Present: Councillor J Ketteridge – (Chairman)
Councillors S Barker, C Cant, J Cheetham, E Godwin, J
Ketteridge, J Menell, E Oliver and V Ranger.

Officers in attendance: M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), R
Harborough (Director of Public Services), M Jones
(Principal Planning Officer), S Nicholas (Senior Planning
Officer), A Storah (Planning Officer) and A Taylor
(Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control).

LDF10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Crome, J
Loughlin, H Rolfe and D Watson.

LDF11 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2011 were received and
signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

LDF12 PROGRESS WITH HOUSING SITES

The Divisional Head of Planning and Building Control reported that
meetings were currently taking place in relation to the identified sites. On
the whole there had been a positive response and some applications
were expected to come forward in the next couple of months.

The meeting then discussed the recent appeal decision in respect of
Woodlands Park, Great Dunmow, where the five year land supply had
not been a key consideration in the Inspectors decision to dismiss the
appeal. Other factors had been given more weight, and this emphasised
the importance of critically examining the impact of any proposed
development site.

Members felt it was important that all Councillors were kept informed
about progress with the LDF. The Chairman said he would look at how
this could best be achieved.

LDF13 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Principal Planning Officer presented a report which set out the key
issues in the consultation on the draft National Planning Policy
Framework. The guidance was to replace the existing system with a
smaller condensed document cutting down the amount and complexity
of planning policy, which was considered to constrain development.
When the NPPF was published in its final form it would become a

material consideration in the determination of planning applications and the new Local Development Framework documents should conform to it

The report highlighted the key issues for members to consider and set out the proposed comments to be submitted in response to the consultation which would be agreed at the Cabinet meeting in October.

On the whole the simplification of the system was welcomed although the future of the existing guidance was still unclear. Members particularly highlighted the planning policy guidance on planning and noise, which was significant for Uttlesford.

The working group commented on the policy changes that would be most relevant to Uttlesford. In relation to housing there was concern at the proposal requiring the housing land supply pipeline to provide 20% more homes than the level of housing growth determined by the council. This figure did not appear to be justified or evidence based and could have a detrimental impact on the district.

The proposal to reduce the threshold from the current 15 homes for affordable housing was welcomed. Members could appreciate the rationale behind the proposal to allow an element of market housing within exception sites but stressed that any proposal should be accompanied by a sound viability study.

There was no reference to 'protecting the countryside for its own sake' currently set out in policy PPS7; this had been an important policy in determining planning applications within rural areas of the district.

After further discussion the working group AGREED the following comments to be referred to the Cabinet and form part of the Council's response.

- The Council welcomes the decision to review and condense the existing range of guidance into a simplified document and remove duplication and inconsistency.
- The Council would welcome some clarity on how supporting guidance (if any) the Government intend to produce.
- The Council objects to the implications of requiring the housing land supply pipeline to provide 20% more homes than the level of housing growth determined by the council as there is no justification or evidence to support this figure.
- The Council welcomes the removal of the minimum threshold for the provision of affordable housing and the potential for the mixed schemes on exception sites as ways of delivering more affordable homes and increasing housing choice in the District.
- The Council objects that the protection of countryside for its own sake is no longer included in the guidance and at the implications of this and would request that the NPPF is amended to include wording from the current PPS7

LDF14 **GREEN BELT BOUNDARY REVIEW: SCOPING REPORT**

The Working Group considered a report which assessed the potential scope for changing the boundary of the Metropolitan Green Belt in Uttlesford District. The report concluded that there was no scope to warrant a change, given that the Green Belt boundary was relatively recent, most of the District was not within the Green Belt and there was sufficient scope to identify land for development elsewhere in the District. The Working Group AGREED with this conclusion.

LDF15 **EMPLOYMENT LAND REVIEW AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

The Working Group received the Employment Land Review which considered the need for land and premises in the district. The report was an independent assessment and would form part of the evidence base that would inform the emerging LDF.

The report had reviewed all the policies in this area and made a number of recommendations, these would inform the basis of future strategies and policies which would be worked up by officers before finally being approved by the Council.

On responding to the report a number of recommendations did not accord with the working group's views. The following points were made and the working group asked that they be taken into account when future policies were prepared.

- Jubilee Works Clavering should not be allocated for redevelopment for residential use in the LDF.
- In relation to future commercial development at Stansted Airport, the working group felt strongly that the existing policy should be retained - land and buildings at the airport should be safeguarded for airport use.
- The site of the proposed Great Dunmow business park should be reallocated for more general commercial use which could include warehousing or a distribution park.
- The site of the London Road south site Great Chesterford should not be retained for employment purposes.

LDF16 **FUTURE MEETINGS**

The dates and times of future meetings were agreed as follows
Monday 10 October - **4.00pm**
Thursday 3 November - **12.00 noon**
Friday 2 December – 9.30am.

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm.